



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Jameson Pickard, Senior Policy Planner
Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: Thursday, November 18, 2021
Subject: **County Official Plan Review – Municipal Feedback**



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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Municipal consultation and formal feedback on the County Official Plan Review. This report builds on staff's September report regarding consultation and engagement (PD2021-21). While some Municipalities have not provided formal comments at this time, each one has had meaningful and ongoing discussions with County staff about their interests and concerns related to the project.

2.0 Background

Since the launch of the project the County has taken steps to ensure that Member Municipalities play an integral role in Official Plan Review. In the fall of 2019, one of the first steps was for staff to meet with each Council or Committee of Council and introduce the Official Plan review project. The County has also consulted with Member Municipalities as a group and on an individual basis, and regularly shared information.

2.1 Joint Municipal Consultation

The County has established a Technical Resource Team (TRT) comprised of Municipal CAOs (or designates), Municipal planning consultants, County Planning Director, Planning Managers, and County consultants (Watson & Associates). This group meets on an as-needed basis to review and discuss matters related to the municipal comprehensive review (MCR) component of the Official Plan Review. The TRT has had a significant role in reviewing and refining Watson's Municipal growth allocations and land needs assessment. The group has met four times to discuss the following:

- policy context, municipal comprehensive review and land needs assessment overview
- draft growth allocations and preliminary findings
- draft community area and employment area land need
- adjustments to allocations, results of revised draft land needs and approach to excess lands

2.2 Specific Municipal Consultation

Staff and Watson also worked with each Municipality through:

- conference calls with staff of each Municipality to discuss local opportunities and challenges, confirm the residential and employment land inventories and identify local stakeholders;

- circulation of draft allocations for Municipal staff comments and conference calls to discuss as needed;
- circulation of draft community area and employment area land needs for Municipal staff comments and conference calls to discuss as needed;
- calls with Municipal staff to discuss employment area conversion requests; and
- contact with Mayors and Municipal/County Councillors as requested.

We have also invited Member Municipalities to participate in public forums and to provide comments through the following:

- invitation to Special Meeting of County Council
- invitation to Public Information Centre to present draft Phase 1 MCR report
- circulation of draft Phase 1 MCR report for comments
- circulation of County Growth Structure Draft Official Plan Amendment 119

2.1 Information Sharing

Staff has also circulated the following project reports to Municipal Clerks for information for their Council members and staff:

- Process and Key Phases
- Progress Report #1
- Communications and Engagement Guide
- Progress Report #2
- Progress Report #3
- Employment Area Conversions
- Progress Report #4
- Alternative Intensification Target
- Regionally Significant Economic Development Area
- Information Overview for Special Meeting of Council
- Consultation and Engagement Overview
- OPA 119 County Growth Structure

3.0 Municipal Comments

Attached to this report is a table which summarizes formal Municipal comments the County has received to date (Appendix A). Some Municipal comments were broad and applicable to later phases of the project, while others were specific and applicable to the Phase 1 (Urban Structure and Municipal Growth Allocations) and Phase 2 (Land Needs Assessment) work that is ongoing.

The comments that are applicable to the Phase 1 growth allocations have been factored into the analysis where appropriate. The County has limited flexibility in allocating growth however, because Growth management is a Provincial-led process as summarized below:

County-wide Population and Employment Forecasts	<p>The Province sets the population and employment forecasts for Wellington to 2051 in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019, as amended):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These forecasts form the basis for establishing a market-based supply of housing. • Lower projections for population or employment are not permitted as they would lead to housing affordability issues and land shortages.
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Distribution of Growth to Member Municipalities	<p>The Province requires Wellington County to distribute this growth to Member Municipalities based on Provincial policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These policies direct where growth should occur, the minimum rates of intensification and minimum density targets.
Determining Land Need for Growth	<p>The Province establishes the requirements to determine the total quantity of land needed to accommodate the forecasted growth to 2051, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for any settlement area boundary expansions, • employment land conversions, and • the quantity of any excess lands. <p>These requirements are laid out in the “Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” published by the Province</p>

Watson will be releasing an addendum to the Phase 1 report which will capture changes made as a result of all feedback received.

4.0 Future Municipal Consultation

The County will continue to meet with Member Municipalities as part of the technical committee. The County will also:

- host a virtual Public Information Centre on Monday, December 13, 2021 at 6:30 pm on the draft results of the land needs assessment;
- circulate the detailed results of the Phase 2 draft land needs assessment and provide a formal opportunity for Municipalities to comment in the new year; and
- provide notice of public open house(s) and public meeting for County Growth Structure Official Plan Amendment to Member Municipalities in the new year.

5.0 Recommendations

That the report “County Official Plan Review – Municipal Feedback” be received for information; and
That the County Clerk circulate the report to Member Municipalities for information.

Respectfully submitted,



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Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Policy Planning

Appendix A

Municipal Comment Summary

Township of Centre Wellington - First Submission (November 8, 2021)

NOTE: County staff has provided the Township's comments to Watson & Associates for their consideration. Due to the timing of the Township's submission, we were unable to provide a response prior to finalizing this report for distribution.

Comment Summary
The Township has provided the County with comments based on the June 16, 2021 Draft Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations. Township Staff note that the comments provided are staff level and have not yet been reviewed by Township Council. The comments provide an overview of the historical growth rates in the Township and raise the following concerns regarding the draft growth allocations for the Township:
1. The Township's allocated share of County growth and annual rate of growth may be too high based on historical growth rates in the Township.
2. The Growth Plan requires the consideration of many factors in determining the feasibility of proposed urban boundary expansions. Is it feasible to finalize growth allocations in the absence of analysis of feasibility of urban expansions in Centre Wellington or other municipalities in Wellington?
3. Is it possible the Province has assigned too much Growth to the County of Wellington? Is it possible to leave some of the growth unallocated?

Town of Erin - First Submission (January 29, 2021)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
The Town's planning consultant (MSH), provided the County with detailed residential land supply information in Erin and Hillsburgh to be considered during the preparation of the municipal growth allocations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This information was provided to Watson & Associates for consideration in the preparation of draft growth allocations based on the Provincial methodology.

Town of Erin - Second Submission (May 14, 2021)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
A second submission from MSH was provided to the County, commenting on draft growth management work that was presented at the April 22, 2021 Technical Resource Team Meeting. These comments are summarized below:	
1. MSH highlights that the County's phased approach to the official plan review is a far from ideal approach to long term planning. Planning cannot be based solely on numbers and must consider the location and character of the community, the nature of the land base and the availability of infrastructure. The Town would request that if the County proceeds with the phased approach, to provide sufficient flexibility in the population and employment targets and related policy framework to allow for adjustments to reflect the results of the more detailed land needs analysis, without an amendment to the County Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County has had to proceed with a phased approach due to shifting Provincial, County and Municipal priorities. In response to this feedback, we note that the forecasts and allocations were excluded from the County Growth Structure Official Plan Amendment (OPA 119). The draft Amendment has been considered by County Council and has been circulated to Municipalities for comment.
2. MSH requested that the County consider that the Future Development land may not meet all of the Town's future needs and that there is a need for additional employment area land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has conducted a detailed review of Future Development land constraints which has resulted in removal of some areas from the County inventory. The Town's comments related to the land needs assessment have been provided to our consultants for their consideration.

Township of Mapleton - First Submission (September 8,2021)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
On behalf of the Township, planning consultants GSP Group Inc. reviewed the draft forecast and allocations for Mapleton and provided detailed comments regarding the distribution of growth across the municipality. GSP also recommended the reconfiguration and rationalization of settlement area boundaries in Mapleton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff anticipates that an Addendum to Watson's Phase 1 report will address the Township's concerns related to growth allocations.

Township of Mapleton - Second Submission (November 20, 2021)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
<p>Township of Mapleton Council received a presentation on the future of Mapleton's growth from GSP which built on the comments above. Council endorsed the presentation and its content.</p> <p>The presentation included an overview of proposed growth for the Township and a review of residential and employment land inventories. There were also a series of opportunities and constraints maps related to land optimization, development staging and other land use considerations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The information received and endorsed by Township Council generally re-affirms the discussions County and Township staff have been having. Matters related to the land needs assessment are being considered by Watson & Associates.

Town of Minto (July 14, 2021)

Town of Minto Council passed the following resolution as it relates to the County of Wellington Official Plan Review:

Comment Summary	Staff Response
That Council of the Town of Minto receives the July, 7, 2021 Update Report 2 from the CAO and Triton Engineering regarding the status of the municipal comprehensive review of the County Official Plan, and that Council offer the following comments for consideration:	
1. That Minto urban area mapping be updated to reflect changes approved by the County in recent official plan amendments;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Minto urban area mapping changes associated with Official Plan Amendment 117 were consolidated into the Official Plan when last revised July 20, 2021.
2. Clear policies come forward from the comprehensive review around urban boundary expansions up to 40 ha and where there is no net increase in land supply to encourage flexibility, reduce boundary rigidity and to increase land development opportunity;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff's policy review will consider Provincial Growth Plan policies allowing for boundary adjustments outside of the MCR (2.2.8.4) and for 40 ha boundary expansions (2.2.8.5, 2.2.8.6), subject to criteria. Policy development will be part of a later stage of the Official Plan Review.
3. Policies be provided allow minor rounding out and infilling in rural settlements such as Drew, Teviotdale and other small housing or commercial clusters;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff's policy review will consider Provincial Growth Plan policies allowing for minor rounding out of rural settlements outside of the MCR (2.2.9.7), subject to criteria. Policy development will be part of a later stage of the Official Plan Review. Draft Official Plan Amendment 119 revises the County Growth Structure, including rural settlements. Any minor rounding out or infilling within small housing or commercial clusters (outside of Hamlets) would be subject to the policies of the applicable designation.
4. Policy be included to allow urban areas to be easily expanded where population and employment targets are exceeded, including re-allocation of surplus growth from municipalities not meeting targets; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside of the exceptions noted in item 2 above, Provincial policies do not allow for urban areas to be expanded unless part of a municipal comprehensive review.
5. That the County continue to use the Technical Engagement Committee during the remainder of the comprehensive review process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff appreciate and support this request. This group is a valuable resource for County Staff to connect directly with Member Municipalities.

Township of Wellington North (August 23rd, 2021)

Township of Wellington North Council passed the following resolution as it relates to the County of Wellington Official Plan Review:

Comment Summary	Staff Response
<p>That Council of the Township of Wellington North receive Report CAO 2021-006 being a report on the Official Plan – Municipal Comprehensive Review;</p> <p>AND FURTHER THAT Council of the Township of Wellington North direct staff to convey the below identified recommendations to the County of Wellington:</p>	
<p>1. County of Wellington (Cow) implement policies to phase growth to ensure that development and implementation of services required for complete communities e.g., social services, policing, emergency services, recreation opportunities/facilities greenspace (parks, trails), transportation network upgrades, childcare, solid waste services, access to potable water, wastewater services and execution of accessibility requirements happen in an orderly well thought out manner. As many of these services are offered through a mix of County and member municipal resources, detailed planning and cooperation is needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support the creation of complete communities in Wellington and the need to cooperate with Member Municipalities. Once finalized, the new forecasts will be used as a basis for planning for future needs by County service providers, Member Municipalities, School Boards, etc. • While Counties like Wellington do not have jurisdiction over water and wastewater servicing, staff can review and/or draft policies, if necessary, to address the need to phase Wellington North's servicing allocations.
<p>2. Cow to undertake consultations with landowners for re-designating future development lands in Wellington North to better reflect current and future use (e.g. agriculture).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff agree that future landowner consultation will be necessary where re-designating Future Development lands.
<p>3. Land designations to be updated in the Official Plan to reflect the Township of Wellington North Community Growth Plan recommendations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Township's Community Growth Plan complements the MCR. • The County will review and consider opportunities to support the Township's plan that meet current Provincial and County policy.
<p>4. Cow consider adjusting growth forecasts for member municipalities to reflect ability and willingness to service designated lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal growth allocations have been determined based on extensive analysis and consultation with Member Municipalities. Through this work, adjustments have been made to allocations to reflect feedback provided, including servicing information.

Township of Wellington North (continued)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
5. Consideration be given to adjusting urban boundaries throughout the county (swaps) to reflect local land use realities (i.e., agriculture land designated future development within urban boundaries) and ability to service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Development designated lands are being analyzed as part of the land needs assessment, particularly those which have been identified by Member Municipalities as being more appropriate for long-term agricultural use.
6. Cow to consider process for friendly annexation of lands from Grey County in the northwest area of Mount Forest for future industrial growth (employment lands).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and our project consultants have discussed the Township's interest in annexing land from the Municipality of West Grey in Grey County. An annexation is typically a complex and long-term undertaking and is therefore, outside of the scope of the current County Official Plan Review. While staff is available for planning advice and assistance, we would consider this a Township-led initiative.
7. Cow develop policies for alternative services i.e., wells/septic's within urban areas where municipal water, wastewater constraints exist, and expansion of those municipal services do not make economic or environmental sense.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will review Provincial water and wastewater servicing policies in the context of the current Official Plan policies and consider whether policy changes are appropriate and/or necessary to address this concern.
8. Cow develop policies to encourage dry industry in designated areas of the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further discussion will be needed regarding this item, which is related to sustainable water consumption for industrial uses in Arthur and Mount Forest. This may be addressed in the Wellington North section of the Official Plan or outside of the Official Plan.
9. Cow acknowledge treatment of leachate from the county landfill site impacts Wellington North's ability to service future growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff understands that this is an ongoing matter between County Solid Waste Services and the Township.

Township of Wellington North (continued)

Comment Summary	Staff Response
<p>10. Cow Planning Committee members be invited to attend the Public Meetings associated with Official Plan Amendment applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public meetings for site-specific County Official Plan Amendments are hosted by the Member Municipality, but the County is the approval authority. The County supports this approach as it is more convenient for local residents to attend, there are often local issues raised, and there are typically local planning applications being considered at the same time (i.e. rezoning). Notice of public meetings are circulated to County Ward Councillors and staff report to Planning Committee on the input provided by the public.